The false wrestler in Azerbaijan life tales

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Abstract

The tales take an important place among the genres of Azerbaijan folklore. These rich folk examples give the rich material in order to study the original views, beliefs, traditions. One can divide the tales into three groups: the magical tales, tales about animals, life tales. The life tales have their own circumference, characters, the specific artistic methods. In life tales the events happen in "a village", "in a palace", "in the field", "near a city". Of course, as there are different points among the life tales and other tale kinds, there are also alike points in them. In the article the characteristic features of the false wrester in the life tales are investigated. It is also noted that this character with the concrete examples is differed from the character of the false wrestler in the magical tales. As it is known the hero of the magical tales is as the performer of the folk ideal. The false hero – wrestler is against to him, he represents the evil. But in the life tales where the false wrestler is described there is almost no any confrontation. In such tales the false wrestler represents the good, he always creates the happy mood.

Keywords: magic, the wonderful birth, the dragon, the giant, Phoenix, the false wrestler, the dark well, dervish (a wandering ascetic), the winged horse.

The tales take an important place among the genres of Azerbaijan folklore. The tales created in the far past periods passing through the generation to the generation have come to the present days. Such kind of rich folklore examples give the rich material in order to study the original views, beliefs and traditions. Traditionally the tales are divided into three groups: the magical tales, tales about animals, life tales. One can concern the general character of the tale genre somehow into all tales belonging to these groups.

The magical fairy tales take the great place in the repertoire of Azerbaijan tale. Such kinds of tales are rich with the extraordinary events, the unusual heroes and the magical objects. In the magical fairy tales with the complex structure the

mythical thoughts of people have been represented particularly. These thoughts were disappeared in the development process little by little, but the tale not losing its aesthetic meaning lives as an art work in the memory of the people.

One of the parts of the folk tales is about the animals. The tales about animals are the most archaical examples of the folklore. Basically in these fairy tales the different animals and birds are the main participants, their movements and attitudes are on the base of the plot.

In comparison with the tales about magic and animals the life fairy tales are closer to the real truth, the social and family-life problems. Unlike the other kinds, "... here the fancy are based on the ordinary thinking norms of the imagined events. The fantastic imagination forms the base of the whole fiction in this case." (6, 96)

The life tales have their own plot circumferences, characters, the spesific artistic methods.

The events in the life fairy tales develop in the village place. The village cottages, houses, farmsteads, forests, fields, the neighbouring cities, caravanserais, shops, bazaars form the foundation for the future events.

If in the magical tales the events happen in the far countries, in very past times, in the magical world, but in the life fairy tales the events happen "in the village", "in the farmstead", "in the field", "in the neighbouring city". For example: "Once upon a time, there was a man in a village, he had a daughter" (5, 125); "Once upon a time, there was a man in Darband, that man had a son called Ahmed" (7, 186).

If we characterize the artistic place of the life fairy tales, we must not speak about the fantastic nature, but we must speak about conventionality. Such kind of conventionality is the typifing means of the presented events by the taleteller. The same point can be said about the time of the life fairy tales.

It is not unreasonable that telling about the place and time of the events in the tale the taleteller sometimes tells the name of a village or a city takes the listeners to the neighbouring village or city, introduces himself as a participant of the events.

It is necessary to mention a point here. Of course, it is not true to put obstacles among the life fairy tales and the other kinds of tales. As there are different points among the life tales and other tale kinds, there are also alike points in them. These points show themselves in the system of characters, too.

In some life fairy tales one can meet the false cabbalist, the false robber, as well as the false wrestler. This hero differs from the false wrestler character described in the magical and heroic tales. Their comparison can help to discover the alike and different peculiarities of these characters.

One of the tale plots of the false wrestler taking the special place is about three brothers, three comrades and three wrestlers. This plot shows itself in some magical and heroic tales, including the tale called "Reyhanin nagili" ("Reyhan's tale") (3, 149-160). Let's remember the content of the tale plot in a short form: "There was an old man with the name Ahmed who had no anyone except his wife

Guljahan. They had a beautiful daughter. The giant kidnaping that beautiful girl enchantmented her. Because of that accident Reyhan's father died. But her fiance was an irremediable person. Reyhan's mother went to find her daughter, but not finding any news about her daughter she was forced to return. But an extraordinary episode changes the event. On the way home Guljahan was thirsty, suddenly she saw a lakelet and she drank all the water there. Later it was known that the lake was a place of sea stallions and they usually drank the water from there. After that event Guljahan became pregnant, she gave a birth to the unusual son. The boy's father was a sea stallion and lived in the sea. Aygir Hasan (Stallion Hasan) became an extraordinary hero. Learning about his sister he wanted to rescue her from the enchantment and he started to the travel to find her. On his way Aygir Hasan met an unusual companion – Jahankesh who had a millstone in his each hand and Fazahir – who was a very strong man. Each of them tried their strength with Aygir Hasan and in that meeting Aygir Hasan won them. Giving each other a brother's promise they continued their way. Making a tent they began to rest in the beautiful meadow. Suddenly the giant coming out from the dark well to the world attacked to Fazahir, tied him and took all his trouphy with itself, the second day again the giant attacked Jahankesh and took all his trouphy. The third day meeting Aygir Hasan the giant was defeated and being wounded in the battle the giant run to the dark well to save its life. Aygir Hasan's friends knew about the event. After that event coming upon the tracks of the giant then they arrived to the dark well. First of all they lower Fazahir to the dark well, but later he began to cry and his friends pulled him out. When they lower Jahankesh the same event happened. It means Aygir Hasan's friends couldn't pass that exam either. But Aygir Hasan managed that difficulty and went to the dark well. Going that dark well he killed three giants there and made the three beuatiful girls free who were hold in captive by the giants. But Aygir Hasan's envier friends cut his string in the well, they wanted to get Aygir Hasan's portion to themselves. Again Aygir Hasan was in the dark well. He differs from his friends not only for his bravery, courage but also for his manhood, sincerity, kindness. As he saved the people from the danger with the help of Phoenix he could return to the world. When Aygir Hasan returned from the dark well he revenged on his treacherous friends, reached his wishes. Aygir Hasan saved his beautiful sister Reyhan from the death. After that event Reyhan's fiance came to ask her hands, but Aygir Hasan protested to him. According to Aygir Hasan's thought his beautiful sister didn't deserve such cowardly man."

In this tale Aygir Hasan is described as a real wrestler, hero, but his friends Jahankesh and Fazahir are the false wrestlers. According to the tale logic the beautiful Reyhan's fiance is also in the row with the false heroes. Simply he doesn't act in the move importantly as others, he appears at the beginning and at the end of the events. Aygir Hasan's attitude to him shows the function of this character clearly.

One of the most interesting tales having in common with the tale "Reyhan" is the tale called "Melik Mammad and Melik Ahmed" (2, 230-231). In this tale the

friendship and mutual love between the brothers are in front of our eyes. In this tale the main heroes of the tale which are in the place of the false hero are Melik Ahmed's friends.

In the tales where the brothers' as well as their friends' respect and love to each other, the peace among them the false hero, the wrestler, the accidental peoples' describtion is known. The tale "Jantig" (1, 79-82) draws attention due to this point. The hero of this tale is born with the help of the magical apple given by the dervish, but he is born as a dead man, later the king's wife gives birth to the vein and when the nurse puts that vein into the cracked part of his breast the baby sneezes and he returns to the life. That baby called Jantig grows up. In his father's palace in the fortieth room he sees the statue of a girl and decides to find her. On his way he meets two unusual comrades. They give each other a solemn promise to become a friend.

"Later they began to tell their names and the meaning of their names. The man coming from the east said:

My name is Goyde Ulduz Taniyan (the man who recognizes the people from their stars). I recognize everyone from his star.

The man coming from the west said:

My name is Daryayi-Jahangir. It means the inside of the sea is dry for me. I can walk all seas.

Jantig also said:

My name is Jantig, it means if anyone takes the vein in my breast i shall be dead, but if it is put in its place i shall be alive". (1, 82)

When the friends arrived in a city they knew that a giant had blocked the water of the city and the city was in danger. Killing the giant Jantig saved the population of the city from the thirst. Jantig didn't inform anyone about that, bringing his bloody sword he hung it over Goyde Ulduz Taniyan's head. The false wrestlers wanted to appropriate that heroism:

"The king told that he would marry his daughter to that person who could kill the giant. The young population of the city hearing that news came to the palace and said: "We have killed the giant". But the princess seeing them didn't agree. She said:

Dad, I have put my bloody hand to the back of his dress".

All population of the city came, but they didn't find the searched man. Days passed, three men came to the city. They stayed in an old woman's place. The king sent a man to call them. The guests came to the palace. Seeing Jantig the princess told that he was that person who saved her life". (1, 83)

The friends consulting among themselves married this girl with Goyde Ulduz Taniyan. Jantig and Daryayi-Jahangir continued their way and arrived in a city. The same event happened in that city, too. Deryayi-Jahangir also married to the princess of that city. But Jantig married with Peri whom he loved. But their happiness didn't last for a long time. One day at night the old witch knowing Jantig's mystic took the vein from Jantig's breast and put it into the sea, she also took Peri with

her. After that event the main place is taken by his friends in the development of the events. Goyde Ulduz Taniyan felt that there was problem with Jantig and at once he found Daryayi-Jahangir. Daryayi-Jahangir brought Jantig's vein and put it in its place. Putting it Jantig began to sneeze immediately and got up. After it in the move of the events Jantig takes the main part, but his devoted, faithful friends move as his helpers. In this tale the hero and his friends meet one another as a friend, give each other a solemn promise and part as friends. These three friends move in this tale as a hero, an invincible wrestler. But in the false hero image stands the city youngsters pretending to kill the giant that made the city population die of thirst. Introducing themselves as the killer of the giant the young men want to get the heroism of Jantig and by that way to marry to the king's daughter.

But it stays as the wish of the false heroes, they couldn't get anything, appearing in the episodic form they disappear. In this tale the main confrontation is between the tale hero Jantig and the old witch. In this counteraction Jantig can find strength to win the old witch, the evil by the help of his extra-ordinary friends and helpers.

In the tales, in general in many parts of the magic and heroic tales the hero-the false hero confrontation is in the nucleus of the plot.

As we mentioned in some life tales one can meet the false hero, the false wrestler characters. Are the same heroes in these tales alike with the heroes mentioned above, to tell the truth, is there a confrontation in these tales? Do the false heroes represent the evil and are they against to anybody? In order to clear up this problem let's remember some life tales. One of these tales is "Hambal Ahmed" (Porter Ahmad) (2, 70-77). With the help of a rich merchant the king knowing the porter Ahmed who was tall and strong includes him to the row of the wrestlers. Putting his clothes and back pillow into the box he saved its key in himself. Suddenly a strange event happened, the princess falled in love with Ahmed, they met in secret. Appearing of a great giant and making the people be waterless frightened Ahmed. The princess persuading Ahmed could send him to the battle with the giant with others. Putting on the wrestler's clothes Ahmed sent the army to the fight, but he slept in the shade of a tree. Suddenly he saw the giant in front of himself took the dagger and killed the giant. The king knowing Ahmed's fame betrothed the princess to him. Later the second giant appeared. Hearing it Ahmed wearing his porter clothes wanted to leave the city. But the princess again could persuade Ahmed and sent him to the battle with giant. Being afraid of the giant Ahmed wanted to save his soul and hid in the top of the tree. Again the giant came to him and being afraid of the giant Ahmed killed it. Knowing about it the king wanted to arrange the wedding of his daughter with Ahmed. Suddenly the other country's king declared the war. Again Ahmed began to fear, wearing his porter clothes he wanted to leave the city. Again the princess could persuade Ahmed with difficulty. Ahmed didn't want to ride the horse, because he was afraid of it. That is why he entered the stable and seeing the old hack he began to rejoice. "But he said to himself:

In any case I must tie my legs.

Asking to call the servants he said:

Tie my legs very firmly to each other under the belly of the horse.

The servants tied his legs to each other very firmly. When Ahmed's legs were tied the king was looking at him from the window. He said to himself:

What a clever man! He chose the best one among the horses. He is really a rider. He could find the winged horse." (2, 76)

When Ahmed began to ride the old hack it tossed the mane and Ahmed uncurbed the horse, it throwed itself on forward, losing all his hopes Ahmed wanted to rein the horse and he hold from the tree, but the tree broke off the root and in that form the horse entered the enemy army unit and dispersed them. At the same time Ahmed was also afraid from all events.

The enemy army unit returned back. Holding the horse with difficulty the servants made Ahmed get off the horse. Being half-dead Ahmed came to himself little by little in some hours. But later forgetting everything he again began to boast.

The tale "Hambal Ahmed" begins with the description of the ordinary life events. The man called Ahmed earns daily money working as a porter, a carrier. One day meeting a rich merchant changes the current of his life. This merchant taking Hambal Ahmed to the unit of the wrestlers in the palace of the king became the instigator of the events. After it the events began to happen in the extra-ordinary adventure.

The tale "Ustajan Ahmed" (4, 154-160) also begins with the description of the ordinary events as in the tale "Hambal Ahmed". Being very lazy and coward Ustajan Ahmed doesn't want to leave the house. Being exasperated by his laziness his wife turns him out of the house and doesn't give him a chance to return back. Living in the ruins he kills fourty flies which crawl over him, then he kills two mice with a stone and this event creates boastfulness in him. Ustajan Ahmed thinks that he has become a wrestler, that is why he orders an iron cap with the note on it: "I am Ustajan Ahmed who killed fourty dragons with a slap and two giants with a stone". He began to walk with that cap on his head. Suddenly meeting seven brothers who were the wrestlers began to change the stream of Ustajan Ahmed's life. He began to live a life with full of adventures. The brothers gave a solemn promise to marry their brave sister to that brave wrestler – Ustajan Ahmed. They took him to their house and told him about their wish. But Ustajan Ahmed didn't agree with them and told that their sister was also his sister and he couldn't marry to her. After that event Ustajan Ahmed's respect increased in their eyes. Some days later the sister of the wrestlers Zore understood that Ustajan Ahmed was a boaster, a cowardly man. But she didn't tell any word to her brothers. When it was Ustajan Ahmed's turn to rob the caravan that brave girl acted as a substitute for him. The brave wrestler brothers considered Ustajan Ahmed as brave as themselves. That is why when the neighbouring country attacked their native land they took Ustajan Ahmed with themselves to protect the country. Hearing that news the chicken-

hearted Ustajan Ahmed asked the brave brothers to put him into the coffin and to tie him tightly, or he could kill somebody on the way. Not doubting his wrestling the brothers delivered him to the king place in that position. The king was very glad to that event. When each wrestler rode a horse and joined the fight Ustajan Ahmed was siezed with fear, but not showing it he asked the king to give him a very strong horse that it could carry him. Ustajan Ahmed entering the stable chose the calmest horse, the winged horse. But he couldn't climb the horse and the brothers put him on the horse. Then they tied him with a sevenfold rope very tightly, when the horse began to run very fast Ustajan Ahmed hold from the tree, but the tree broke off the root and in that form the horse entered the enemy army unit and dispersed them. Ustajan Ahmed began to cry: "Don't let, hey, keep!" Ustajan Ahmed called people to hold the horse. But the soliders of the enemy army thought that he roared in order to kill them. The army was killed because of the tree. All considered him a giant and everyone run away. When the brothers reached to him they saw that he was crying as "Hey, don't let!" and rode the horse in different directions. The seven wrestlers-brothers considered that Ustajan Ahmed destroyed the enemy army and because of his anger he didn't recognize them. They approached him and pulled his winged horse by the bridle". (4, 158)

Learning the situation from the people and condidering Ustajan Ahmed as a brave wrestler the king rewarded him. Seeing such attitude Ustajan Ahmed again began to boast very much.

M. Kazimoglu considers such plot in two ways, it means the main character is a hero hiding the main essence under the veil of the laziness and the cowardice, the main hero supposes to be characterized as a false wrestler and comes to the conclusion that the mythological root of the main hero here can be connected with the function in the initial ceremony of the slave: "We think that not the lazy and coward one, but he is the same slave – jester substituting the king in the level "temporary death" and rendering the king a service in order to gain the new life. It means here (in myth and ceremony) one mustn't speak about the slave, but about the new essence of the king gained with the help of the slave. In other words, here the main problem is not the overturn of the lazy and coward man into the hero, but the revival of the king according to the funny adventures of the lazy and coward man. Just as this belief played the important role in the appearing of the jester character, may be it also formed the main essence of the character lazy and coward one." (8, 93)

What characters do the heroes of the life tales such as "Ustajan Ahmed", "Hambal Ahmed" and etc. differ from the false heroes of the magic tales for? Let's remember once more that the false hero in the magic tales represents the evil, he stands against the real hero, the false hero wants to privatize his heroism and he tries to annihilate the hero with different ways. But the heroes of the life tales we mentioned such as Ustajan Ahmed, Hambal Ahmed and etc. form the quite opposite of such false heroes. M.Kazimoglu comes to the conclusion that the appearance

of the lazy and coward heroes in the tales, really, as an example of the parody affirmed the other examples in the tales.

"If the false wrestler becomes the "double" of the juggler, his (the false wrestler's) analogous in the tales become "the copy" of the kings, as well as other characters – heroes, merchants, cabbalists, robbers described in the strict plan. The function of making the people around the false wrestler laugh is in the focus of attention of his analogous of the tales. The main attention in the state of being a military leader of the coward, the merchantry of the cobbler, the knowledge of the illiterate person and the robbery of the helpless person directs to the audience to make laugh, to increase the love of life". (8, 99)

So the heroes in these tales represent the good and create the pleasant mood in the people around them. For what do these heroes differ from the heroes, wrestlers of the magic tales?

We must note that the extra-ordinary heroes of the magic tales such as Malikmammad, Siman, Aygir Hasan, Kal Hasan, Jantig and others are in the same row with Basat who was one of the famous heroes of the epos "Kitabi-Dede Gorgud". These heroes solving the most difficult problems protect the country from the catastrophe. These heroes are the expressors of folk ideal.

In the magic tales the events are presented in a strict form, here the said word, movement are done till the end. The heroes, wrestlers described in the strict form are not afraid to choose the most difficult travel, the exile way. These heroes fullfil their duty, the difficult task with honour and conscience. These heroes are far away to spread their own bravery and valour. But on the contrary they try to hide their bravery and valour from others mostly. For example, in some tales the invincible heroes killing the giant rescue the people from the lack of water, the difficult trouble and moving off the incident place try to hide themselves. But after the definite search as a result of the sign done by the princess they are brought to the king's palace and are valorized decently.

But in some tales the invincible heroes, wrestlers live for the definite time with the fabricated names and with this way they try to hide themselves. As a result of the good actions such heroes become a brave man with golden-silver hair with the help of the extra-ordinary forces.

This hero coming to the strange country changes his wrestler clothes and enters the city with the ordinary clothes:

"- … Go along the way, later you will meet the white water, have a bath in that water, then you will meet the black water, wash your eyes and eyelashes with that water, then again you will meet the red water, wash your cheeks with it. At last you will see the silver water, wash your head with it.

After doing everything that the head told the Malik Jumshud he washed his head with the last water. He became as fresh as the moony. One side of his head was golden, but the other side was silver. He arrived in a city. He got off the horse in the suburbs of the town. Malik Jumshud took the hair from the horse, the bird, and the lion, put it into his pocket. He left all the three animals and came to a shep-

herd. He bought a sheep from him, cut it, gave its meat to the shepherd, turned its stomach back to front and came to the city." (1, 96).

Coming to the city Malik Jumshud became the helper of the king's gardener. During the ceremony of "choosing the fiancé" the little girl of the king threw an apple to Malik Jumshud. Being angry of that event the king celebrated the luxurious wedding to his other daughters, but he turned out his daughter and Malik Jumshud to the threshing barn. But when the king became ill and the enemy army attacked the city it was cleared that Malik Jumshud was a real hero, but the other sons-in-law were the false heroes.

In this tale the important feature of the folklore poetics – the importance of the clothes changing act in order to realize some problems is reflected. One can often meet this problem in other genres of folklore. For example, in the epos "Kitabi-Dede Gorgud" when Beyrek returns to the country Oghuz and in the epos "Koroglu" when Koroglu changes his clothes in the difficult travels, such changing attracts the attention as the important attributive sign of the hero. In the tale above mentioned the hero changing his clothes achieves his aim.

It is necessary to note that appearing of the character the bald-fiance in the tale is not casual. It is connected with the magical thinking. In ancient times the people hiding themselves in the skin of the totem animals conducted trials. Due to this thinking the hero of the tale also puts the skin of the animal on his head, hides himself from the enemies, he acts in this image intentionally. (9, 244)

In the tale "The boy with a white horse" (1, 276-302) the hero is not saved from the difficulties only for his heroism, but also for his benevolence, that is why the magic animals and birds always help him. During the different trials changing his clothes and with the made-up name Narbala moves, by this way he wants to hide himdelf. At the end of the events he is recognized as a brave, invincible hero and the evil forces kneel down in front of this invincible hero.

But in the tales "Hambal Ahmed" and "Ustajan Ahmed" the "wrestling", "bravery" of the heroes carries the accidental character. As a result of the accident Hambal Ahmed who came to the heroes' row of the king had to wear the wrestler clothes. But in the tale "Ustajan Ahmed" the hero of the tale Ustajan Ahmed being very lazy and coward, being turned out the house by his wife represents himself as a brave wrestler to the seven brothers wrestlers. But in the move of the events his personality, his strength are seen clearly. Every time when Hambal Ahmed is in the difficulties putting his wrestler clothes off and putting his porter clothes on he tries to escape. But Ustajan Ahmed tries to show himself as a hero till the end.

In both tales one of the interesting points is that the people around the coward tale hero understand differently, but the "hero" thinks how to save his life. For example, in the tale on the winged horse Ustajan Ahmed cries with the words "hey, don't let, keep" and asks everyone to hold the horse and help him. But the seven brothers wrestlers understand so that as if Ustajan Ahmed is so angry that he wants to kill everyone and they take him off the horse by force. In fact Ustajan Ahmed thinks about his life, he becomes very happy as he is taken off the winged